

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 SCCT-01 CPR-01 SAM-01

IO-10 /066 W

----- 090788

O 251535Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0700

INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

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E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SA, US

SUBJ: DEATH OF KING FAISAL

REF : JIDDA 2127 NOTAL

1. FOLLOWING RADIO ANNOUNCEMENT APPROXIMATELY 1430 LOCAL TIME (1130 GMT) MARCH 25 OF KING FAISAL'S DEATH, DCM WAS CALLED TO FOREIGN MINISTRY WHERE TEXT OF ROYAL DIWAN PROCLAMATION CONFIRMING KING'S DEATH, ELEVATION OF CROWN PRINCE KHALID TO THE THRONE, AND THE APPOINTMENT OF FAHD AS CROWN PRINCE, WERE READ TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS CHIEFS (TEXT AVAILABLE TO ADDRESSEES VIA FBIS).

2. AT 1600, VICE GOVERNOR OF MECCA, PRINCE AHMED BIN ABD AL-AZIZ (HALF BROTHER OF KING KHALID AND OF FORMER KING FAISAL AND FULL BROTHER OF FAHD AND SULTAN) ADDRESSED THE GROUP. PRINCE KHALID SAID KING FAISAL'S DEATH A GREAT LOSS. IN HIM WAS LOST A STATESMAN WHO HAD WORKED
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FROM HIS YOUTH UNTIL TIME OF HIS ETERNAL REWARD FOR WEL-

FARE OF HIS PEOPLE. AHMED SAID HE HAD NOTHING TO ADD TO PROCLAMATIONS FROM ROYAL DIWAN EXCEPT TO ASSURE DIPLOMATS THERE WERE NO DIFFERENCES OF OPINION WITHIN THE ROYAL FAMILY AND THAT IN THE FUTURE HARMONY AND CONCORD WOULD CHARACTERIZE THE AFFAIRS OF THE KINGDOM AS THEY HAD DURING THE DAYS OF KING FAISAL. HE SAID HE WAS CERTAIN THAT AS MEMBERS OF ISLAMIC STATE, ALL CITIZENS WOULD CONTINUE TO BEND THEIR EFFORTS TO THE COMMON GOOD. HE AGAIN REASSURED HIS LISTENERS OF THE SOLIDARITY OF THE ROYAL FAMILY AND PROMISED AGAIN THAT CONTINUITY WOULD BE THE DOMINANT CHARACTERISTIC OF THE NEW REGIME.

2. APART FROM CONFIRMING THAT KING FAISAL WOULD BE BURIED IN RIYADH AFTERNOON OF MARCH 26, FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD NO IDEA WHETHER FOREIGN AMBASSADORS COULD OR SHOULD ATTEND.

3. SEVERAL FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS REMARKED TO DCM THAT THEY HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE SMOOTHNESS AND FAST REACTION TIME OF THE TRANSITION OF POWER FROM FAISAL TO KHALID.

4. COMMENT: SUCCESSION DOES INDEED APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN HANDLED VERY SMOOTHLY. SPEED WITH WHICH IT ACCOMPLISHED POSSIBLE DESIGNED TO QUIET UNREST AND DISSENSION WHICH MIGHT HAVE ARISEN FROM THE FACT THAT THE KING WAS SLAIN BY A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL FAMILY. RADIO HAS BEEN READING TELEGRAMS OF SUPPORT FOR THE NEW KING, PROMINENTLY AMONG THEM A TELEGRAM FROM MINDEF PRINCE SULTAN PLEDGING HIS OWN SUPPORT AND THAT OF THE ARMY TO THE NEW KING.
AKINS

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